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PREFACE.

THE PROSPECTUS, which has for so long a time been published, and is now prefixed to this work, renders it superfluous to offer any further prefatory explanation of the EDITOR'S intention, or of the nature of his object. The unequivocal marks of approbation, which, in every part of the union, have been so liberally bestowed upon his plan, exempt him from the customary formalities of an excuse for it. Whatever apology he may hereafter be obliged to offer for the execution, he can have none to make for the design, since that has obtained the sanction of general, indeed he might, without greatly violating truth, say, unanimous applause.

Conscious of the very humble rank in letters, to which he can venture to aspire, and at the same time aware of the difficulties that beset him, he considers it to be his duty not to shrink from the task he has undertaken, and, while he feels the disproportion of his capacity to the magnitude and importance of such a work, to strain

that capacity to the utmost, and to draw upon industry for the deficiencies of genius.

Disdaining to take credit for any thing to which he is not fairly entitled, he wishes to open to his readers the whole scope of his pretensions for a work of this kind, in which little fame can be procured beyond that of a good compiler. A compiler, however, is not without his claims to praise. He who imparts the knowledge he has acquired from books, to those who have not leisure, diligence, or abilities to acquire it through the long laborious work of close study and research, is at least useful, and though his glory be not so great, his labours may be as beneficial to mankind as those of the original author. A vast majority of the world are necessarily excluded from serious application, and many are desirous of knowledge, who cannot hunt it through multitudes of large volumes. To provide such persons with easy means of access to a portion of literature, is to benefit society. He who enables others to fill up, with rational amusement, and instructive pleasure, intervals of time which would otherwise be devoted to idleness or vice, is entitled to the gratitude of society. But, besides all this, the requisites for compilation are not a few or unimportant, since to select judiciously requires some share of penetration, judgment and taste: The compiler of such a work as the present, may be considered as one of the bees of literature, who

lights upon the choicest flowers as they spring, extracts from them their most precious sweets, and deposits them in store for general use.

In some part of this work the labours of the editor will seem to have claims to consideration of an order superior to that of the mere compiler. Much of his own mind, and comparatively, little of that of others will of course find their way into the historical and critical parts of it. The fundamental materials will of course be borrowed; but the composition, the arrangement, or to speak figuratively, the attitude and drapery of the work will be chiefly his own, yet even here he wishes his readers to understand that he will not suffer overweening confidence in his own powers, to prevent his calling in the aid of such useful thoughts, and felicitous expressions as his reading or recollection of the highest writers shall present to him. To afford instruction and amusement in the best way he can, is his determination; and if in his endeavours to accomplish that object, he shall occasionally be found incorporating the thoughts and language of superior understanding, with his own, he may be considered (as respects his readers at least) as raising his understandings up to the height of that from which he borrows, and so far increasing his means of fulfilling his engagement to the public. He owes to his candour, and his character this avowal, and he is not ashamed to acknowledge a docility which will be productive of advantage to his readers.

PROSPECTUS
OF THE
MONTHLY REGISTER,
AND
REVIEW OF THE UNITED STATES.

It is allowed, that nothing of the literary kind is at this time so much wanted as a periodical publication, which would combine within itself the two-fold advantage of diffusing general knowledge, and standing as a permanent record of all the public transactions of the time; which would enlighten the minds, and improve the morals and the manners of the existing generation, and deliver down to posterity, for the use of the future historian, all the political facts and public transactions of the day, untinged with false colouring and unsullied by political prejudice.

Such a work has been long contemplated by the Subscriber, and he is encouraged to proceed in it by the promise of support from many respectable acquaintances, with whose influence and patronage he hopes to publish it soon, under the title of

THE MONTHLY REGISTER,
AND REVIEW OF THE UNITED STATES.

This work will be conducted, as nearly as possible, on the plan of the English Annual Register, whose reputation for utility and agreeableness has not been equalled by that of any other production of the same kind. Each number will be divided into two parts; the first historical and political, the second miscellaneous and literary.

The historical part will contain a regular and impartial history of the great political occurrences of the past month, the first place, and the largest room, being always allotted to those of the United States. The debates of Congress, and such debates of the several state legislatures, as may be of general importance to the union, and make a part of its history, shall be given in a concise form. In this part, all acts of Congress will be recorded; and thus not only the substance of our na-

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tional counsels, but the names of those who take an important share in them, will be handed down to the impartial judgment of posterity, and those, not yet born, be enabled to form a just opinion of the talents and virtues of their ancestors. There will be added a collection of important state papers, which will stand at once as incontrovertible proofs and illustrations of the historical facts. A chronicle, which will be a depository of those remarkable occurrences that are most apt to enter into common conversation, will succeed the history and the debates.

The second or miscellaneous and literary part, will be devoted to the improvement of the public mind and morals. At this moment the world is inundated with books, which, under the most treacherous and seductive form, contain the most deadly poison to the morals of society. Not Deism alone, but immorality and Atheism are insinuated through the medium of those productions, which, from their nature, are most apt to lay strong hold upon the fancy of young persons. He who detects such books, and arrests the hand of youth when stretched forth to use them, and on the other hand takes the pains to select and recommend to studious perusal, those which have an opposite tendency, may be fairly ranked among the benefactors of mankind.

For the attainment of these important ends, it is proposed to arrange the contents of this division in the following order :—

The first chapter shall contain such extracts from works of celebrity in prose, as may be recommended by their literary excellence, or their useful information respecting subjects of local or general importance ; and such new discoveries as may have been found useful, and such inventions and projects as shall have had the test of successful experiment, shall be explained and unfolded, for the benefit of agriculturists, manufacturers and mechanics, and for the improvement of domestic æconomicks. Among others, those parts of the reports of agricultural societies in Europe, which shall appear likely to apply to the different soils, climates, and natural circumstances of the United States. Literary and miscellaneous essays will be added.

Every thing which contributes to innocent pleasure, and can preserve the mind from the mischiefs of idleness, should be considered as worthy of cultivation. Music, while it affords the purest delight, has the power of directing, soothing and controuling the human passions. The persuasion of its influence occasioned some of the greatest of the ancient legislators and philosophers to recommend it as an essential part of republican education. We shall, therefore, give some of our pages to music

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as a science, and to its history, with occasional reviews, taken from the most approved authorities, of the best new musical pieces which shall be published in Europe. Nor can the DRAMA be deemed foreign to a work whose great objects is to improve the public mind. Those new pieces, whether American or English, which are likely to have a favourable influence on the morals and manners of society, will be duly recommended to the notice and approbation of the public. And the performers of distinguished eminence on the American stage shall receive the meed, which it is the duty of fair criticism to bestow upon merit.

The next chapter will be devoted to a review of new publications, whether original or re-published in America, and of such of the European works also, as shall be found worthy of particular attention, pieces of Poetry will conclude the whole.

Each of these two parts shall be paged separately from the other, so that at the end of the year the twelve numbers may be divided into two volumes; one under the title of the HISTORICAL, the other that of the LITERARY REGISTER; and with the last number of the year, a separate title page and index shall be given, to be prefixed to each volume.

Such is the intended plan of the proposed publication; and if it were executed with candor and tolerable ability, few would hesitate to allow that its advantages must be great. The first, and perhaps the most important of them, is the communication of political intelligence through a medium perfectly pure. The English work, already alluded to, is a remarkable instance of the value of such writing. There are no annals extant, (not even excepting those composed at times the most remote from the events commemorated) which have obtained a greater reputation for impartiality than the history in Doddsley's Register of the *occurrences of the times*, although written by a man who was considered as one of the most zealous and vehement supporters of a particular party. That great author well knew, (what the Editor of the present undertaking will ever keep in mind) the great difference there is between the office of an *historian* and a *partisan*. The opinions of the latter are estimated according to the character in which they are given; nor can blame be justly imputed on account of the zeal manifested by those of any party in a state, whilst its adversaries assail them with eloquent violence. But the business, and consequently the duties of an historian, are wholly dissimilar. He stands pledged, by the very nature of his undertaking, to a rigid im-

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partiality; his engagement is to communicate information, not to make profelytes; to relate and arrange in clear order the facts that actually occur, not to urge opinions concerning them; to state the measures which government adopt, not to censure or defend them.

The Editor is aware that there are two distinct species of history, each of which has been warmly applauded and warmly condemned. The one founded on the Grecian model, in which facts are stated with very little of the historian's own remarks or disquisitions; the other formed by Livy, and since enlarged by Voltaire, Robertson, Hume and Gibbon, which gives greater scope to the powers of the historian's mind; permits him fully and minutely to describe the manners and morals of the varying ages; to trace every event through the windings and mazes of public or private intrigue; to exhibit his knowledge of man in splendid portraits of distinguished characters; to expatiate in moral and philosophical observations on each passing scene; and to distinguish each remarkable actor according to his deserts, in the language of eulogium or reproach.

Which of those two kinds of history is the more useful or the more entertaining, it is not now requisite to discuss; but it seems evident that the first is more suitable for histories of our own times. It is a business of great difficulty and delicacy to assign the motives of the conduct of actors who are living, and whose characters cannot be thoroughly divulged, until time shall bring forth the memoirs of those who were most intimately connected with them. Few are able, and of those very few are willing to disclose the arcana of state affairs; their interest, their friendship, their political connections forbid it; and it is a task no less arduous and ungracious to delineate the manners and morals of a whole nation, than those of one of its principal magistrates. What is excellent, and what we should view with rapture, if related of an ancient commonwealth, the influence of habit leads us to contemplate with indifference; nor is it otherwise with respect to those things which should excite our indignant reprobation. Every motive, therefore, and every reason tend to bind the Editor to that **STRICT AND IMPARTIAL PLAN OF HISTORY, FOR WHICH HE CONSIDERS HIMSELF INVIOLABLY PLEDGED TO HIS SUBSCRIBERS.**

The critical part of this work, may be as beneficial in the literary, as the former in the political republic. It is well known, that the reviews so long established in London and Paris, have greatly tended to harmonise and purify the style of the French and English languages.—

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Many a loose and careless writer has been made correct by the salutary censurers of public criticism. In this part of his duty the Editor also pledges himself to observe the same impartiality, and to render the same literary justice to the political writer, whether he maintains the opinions of Mr. Burke or Mr. Paine; of Montesquieu or Machival; and to the investigator of philosophy, whether he brings his tenets from the bright and sacred altar of Christianity, the porticoes of the Lyceum, or the cheerless gardens of Epicurus. In the performance of this part of his undertaking, the Editor is promised the assistance of some literary friends, and he hopes to be favoured with the aid of those gentlemen of letters in Carolina, who are desirous of supporting a

LITERARY WORK UNCONNECTED WITH PARTY POLITICS.

✻ No Copies will be sold but to Subscribers.